



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VII
901 NORTH 5TH STREET
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101

DEC 11 2002

Mr. Ronnie Raum
Forest Supervisor
401 Fairgrounds Road
Rolla, Missouri 65401

Dear Mr. Raum:

RE: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Ram's Horn Project in the Mark Twain National Forest's Houston, Rolla, and Cedar Creek Ranger's District, November 2002

The Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Ram's Horn Project in the Mark Twain National Forest. Our review is provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. 4231, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508, and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA). The FEIS was assigned the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) number 020483.

Our review of the June 2002 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project resulted in a rating of EC-2 (Environmental Concerns-Insufficient Information). That rating was based on the limited analysis of the cumulative impacts on soil quality due to commercial harvest, sedimentation impacts to water resources, and changes in bird habitat. The EPA also expressed concerns that timber industry trends could create a local economic dependence on the Mark Twain National Forest, potentially limiting forest management alternatives and thus leading to the exhaustion of valuable natural resources in the area. After review of the FEIS, the EPA believes that these issues have been adequately considered and afforded appropriate mitigation. Therefore, EPA does not object with the Forest Service's decision to implement the preferred alternative.

The EPA commends the work of all those persons and agencies involved in the process leading to the development of the FEIS. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at (913) 551-7805.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Rocha
NEPA Reviewer
Environmental Services Division

